



Doug Dean Recreation Reserve Master Plan Update

Community Consultation report

December 2018

INTRODUCTION

The City of Ballarat is undertaking a Master Plan update at the Doug Dean Recreation Reserve in Delacombe. To inform this work, initial community consultation was undertaken in October and November 2018 using community drop-in sessions, stakeholder meetings and a community survey. Findings have been collated to identify the areas of community feedback and will be used to help inform the updated Master Plan, which will recommend upgrades, identify actions, responsibilities and community involvement for the future of the Reserve. Key findings have been listed in the Executive Summary with further detail provided in the remainder of the report. A draft Master Plan will be released for further community feedback in early 2019.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Consultation activities gathered feedback from around 120 community members and stakeholders through meetings, community drop-in sessions and online and hard copy surveys. Key findings from the feedback included the following.

Valued aspects of the Reserve and things that should not change:

- Walking paths
- Playground and circle of rocks
- BBQ area and picnic area
- Wetland area with nesting boxes and birdlife
- Open spaces
- Stadium – supporting a range of community activities
- Sporting ovals
- Community garden
- Peace and quiet, friendly atmosphere
- BMX jumps

Areas for improvement:

- Safety and security, including lighting and traffic management
- Toilet functionality – door, often out of order, suggestion of additional toilets

- Playground – additional equipment, including equipment for older children, fencing for safety, shelter, unique equipment
- Sports clubrooms and facility upgrades – social space, adequate changerooms, general amenity, grandstand/more cover for spectators, better quality pitch, officially established rugby field, path around oval, lighting
- Stadium upgrades– including ventilation, toilets and changerooms, general amenity
- BMX park area upgraded – affected by rainfall, a track that would cater for a wider range of abilities, lighting
- Add a skate park for scooter and skateboards added with half pipe, bowl or ramp
- Add a basketball area
- Add an outdoor area for roller-skating/blading
- Increased shade, shelter and windbreaks – around playground, BBQ area, community garden and reserve more generally, more trees
- Wetlands – needs to be cleaned out, reduced rubbish, sculpture islands have sunk/moved
- Dogs – fenced dog area, dog poo bag dispensers, signage reminding people to pick up dog litter
- General – more bins, tables and seating at playground, around cricket oval and at skate area, garden and along walking tracks
- More car parking
- Drainage – crossing over floodway at Fleur Court
- Add a water park
- Add outdoor gym equipment
- Small sound shell or large rotunda
- Paths - more footpaths, including around oval, connection between Royale Street to oval

METHOD

Throughout October and November, a number of opportunities were provided to community members to provide feedback on their experiences and thoughts about the Doug Dean Reserve. There was information provided on the City of Ballarat's My Say platform including an online survey, and hard copy survey which was placed at the Delacombe Community Hub, Ballarat South Community Hub, Sebastopol Men's Shed and Ballarat Community Health in Vickers Street along with return boxes. The Delacombe Walking group also distributed around 500 hard copy surveys to letterboxes in the Delacombe neighbourhood. The survey was open for 6 weeks, closing on 30th November 2018. A total of 91 surveys were completed online and in hard copy.

City of Ballarat representatives and the consultants held two community drop-in sessions. The first was at the same time as a regular monthly community morning tea hosted by the YMCA on 16 October. There were around 16 people in attendance, providing a range of feedback which has been captured and summarised below. An additional two drop-in sessions were held at the Delacombe Community Hub on the evening of Tuesday 23 October and in the morning of Thursday 25 October. These sessions were not well attended, but City of Ballarat staff and PLOT Landscape Architects were able to use the opportunity to go out into the reserve with hard copies of the survey and speak to representatives from the cricket club, rugby club, roller skating club and kids using the skate park and playground, gathering some valuable feedback which has been included within the survey responses.

In addition to this, the consultants, PLOT Landscape Architects attended the Delacombe Chairs meeting to promote the project, which included representatives from the local primary schools, Ballarat Community Health, YMCA and others. A separate meeting with the Delacombe Primary School Principal also took place to discuss the use of the Reserve by the school and the implications of the election commitment for a new stadium for the primary school in relation to the Master Plan.

FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY DROP-IN SESSIONS

As mentioned in the 'method', the drop-in sessions were poorly attended by community. Instead, information collected from conversations with Reserve users during these times was entered using the survey forms and responses have been included as survey responses. However, the community morning tea provided a useful forum for discussion and comments from community members on 16 October at the Delacombe Community Hub, including:

- **Toilets** - Door of new toilets constantly broken so toilet is out of operation for a lot of the time. Change the automatic door to a hinged one. Frustrating that it is often not working.
- **Water area** – maintenance needs to be improved, lots of rubbish, sculpture islands have sunk/moved.
- **Drainage** - Large open drainage grates - can they be moved/renewed/concreted...and maintained more often. Rubbish in them. Fleur Court access path – very wet crossing the drainage channel in winter and if overflowing after rain. Would like to see a raised crossing as has recently been installed at other similar locations in the reserve.
- **Shelter and shade** - Need to shelter BBQ and community garden area from north winds, more shade – trees good, shade sails at playground, skate area.
- **Community Hub** - needs repainting on the outside.
- **Flora and fauna** - provides good bird habitat.
- **Dogs** – dog poo not picked up, better enforcement/more ranger presence, discussion about a specific dog-off leash area (maybe on oval – except there was concern about dog poo being left here) but don't want to see off-leash over whole reserve. Prefer it to be dog-on-leash as it is currently, as don't want to be "over-run" with dogs and people want to be able to freely walk in reserve without dogs coming up to them, especially when there are children around, provide dog-poo bags.
- **Vehicle access** - Vehicles currently coming in off Greenhalghs Road (south-east corner) during cricket match and parking in the reserve on the grass. Gate is currently open because access is required for new building works at primary school but would like to see this gate locked/no access when not in use by builders.
- **Playground** - Playground well used – often very busy, provide some more challenging play equipment (8 to 10-year-olds and older) – playground is currently for young children. Make it bigger and better, kids currently like climbing on the rocks in the circles.
- **Seating** - More seats. At playground, around cricket oval and at skate area, garden and along walking tracks.
- **Rubbish bins** - Not enough rubbish bins – too much rubbish in reserve.
- **Lighting** - More lighting.
- **BMX track** - BMX riders currently use the area around the hub and that causes some damage. Keep BMX track and make more useable.
- **Paths** - connections are good and valued.
- **Outdoor gym equipment** - Pick My Project application was recently submitted to get funding for outdoor gym equipment but unfortunately missed out.
- **Gardens** – beautification, live performances: amphitheatre – community access/events. Needs to be a more dynamic space with more events, including food trucks/pop-ups. Don't plant trees too close to residents' fences as roots - can affect the walls of sheds.

COLLATED SURVEY RESULTS – 91 Responses

Q1 SUMMARY

What is working well at Doug Dean Recreation Reserve and what do you like?

This question generated a positive response from the community which favours the Doug Dean Reserve as a place for children to play and enjoy open space, a place for families to gather, a local accessible area for all ages and the elderly to enjoy. Some common themes included that the skate park and roller-skating opportunities are important to people and that local sporting clubs value the use of the oval and stadium.

36% of those surveyed strongly valued the playground including the circle of rocks, with a further 19% happy with the BBQ area and picnic facilities, the gardens and the open spaces that the Reserve offers.

19% of those who responded indicated that they enjoy the Wetland area, with positive comments regarding the beauty of this new area which attracts wildlife. There was a positive response to the bird boxes in the lake.

The community strongly values the walking paths and lake circuit path with 17% of those surveyed happy with the current walking tracks and open spaces as a place for walkers. There was a positive response to the provision of the drinking water fountain.

19% of people commented that they are happy to have a Stadium. Those surveyed were in strong support of the Stadium as the home for Roller Derby in Ballarat. Positive responses have been received regarding Skate Fit and Fun Skate. This venue is a place to skate indoors during the winter months and is seen as a multipurpose facility for many areas within the community. The facility is providing the community with a unique recreational option which enables families to enjoy sport together and keep fit all year round. The cost of activities at the Stadium is seen as affordable.

The Rugby Union and Cricket Club value the use of the oval with 12% of those who responded happy to have a sporting ground for the use of local sporting clubs.

6% of those who responded are happy with the community garden and a further 3% of those surveyed see the Reserve as a dog-friendly park and enjoy walking their dogs there.

In response to this question, those surveyed were positive regarding the size and location of the park.

Individual comments regarding this question included:

- I enjoy showing the area to newcomers and visitors
- Local convenience
- Easy parking
- Quiet space, no bullying zone
- Happy with parking provided
- Good to have the provision of a water drinking fountain
- Enjoy the older kids exercise area and pump track
- Happy to have the addition of public toilets near the playground
- Enjoy socialising/exercising/community activities
- Walking group

Quote from respondent: "I love the peace and simplicity - a place for all ages with the facilities it contains. I like the space, water birds, looking at your gardens growing. For me, the Reserve is perfect."

Q2 SUMMARY

What is not working well at Doug Dean Recreation Reserve and what don't you like?

42% of the responses were regarding concern for safety and security at the park. The comments emphasised the need for more lighting, made suggestions to manage and slow traffic and improve road conditions and parking at the Reserve. There are also concerns regarding vandalism and car break-ins.

The comments suggest that lighting in the car park is needed after dark for traffic and public safety in the Reserve. Suggestions were made for more lighting to enable walkers to exercise later in the day and to provide security for people in the reserve after dark.

The responses indicate that vandalism is a concern. Suggestions were also made to install security cameras and/or have patrols of the area. This together with extra lighting will help to prevent break-ins to cars and provide further security for visitors to the Reserve.

There are safety concerns regarding traffic and access to the grounds and the condition of the roads. One response suggests that traffic entering the Reserve from Royale Parade is a concern and dangerous for children. Cars performing burnouts make it unsafe for children crossing the road. Several responses suggest the inclusion of speed humps or chicanes to slow the traffic. It has been suggested that better traffic management is required to calm the speeding cars and ensure a safer environment. Comments also indicated that there are potholes that need to be fixed. The responses indicated that the car park at times is too small and this becomes unsafe. A suggestion was made that a bus zone is needed as currently the bus driver for the after-school program is unable to safely park.

The community greatly values the Stadium, Clubrooms and Skate Park however 34% of those who responded strongly indicated that there is need for improvements and repairs to these facilities. 14% responded that the Stadium is dated and stuffy and requires improved ventilation, has a leaking roof, toilets and showers need updating, floor has gaps and needs repair and general cleanliness needs improvement. Suggestions were made to install vents or a roller door that could be opened to improve air flow.

The oval and clubrooms are valued in the community by the local rugby and cricket clubs however 9% of those who responded stated that the clubrooms are lacking adequate changerooms and facilities and the condition of the rooms is below acceptable. The response stated that the rooms are stale, have no atmosphere and do not have social options. This is impacting on the club's ability to attract players. Comments were made regarding the poor layout of the rooms. It is suggested that the playing ground needs an upgrade and one response suggested the oval should be fenced. It is suggested that this area also needs lighting. It was also suggested that AFL posts during the football season would be an improvement as locals currently go elsewhere.

The responses regarding the Skate Park all suggest improvements. The dirt jumps currently do not flow and are affected by rain. It has been suggested that the area should be redesigned and made larger as there is ample room in the Reserve. The comments indicate that the Skate Park is a valued part of the Reserve which is currently not working well.

A suggestion has been made that the view of the Skate Park from Royale Parade should be screened with trees and shrubs. An outdoor roller-skating area has also been suggested.

23% of those surveyed stated that the toilets are constantly out of order and this is of major concern for the users of the park.

15% of the responses were concerned about shade in the Reserve. The responses suggested that there is not enough shade in the playground area for the children and their carers.

8% of responses suggested more trees are planted for general shade and shelter in the Reserve. There is a concern that there is no shelter from the wind in the park. A wind break for the BBQ area has been suggested. Cover for spectators at the oval is needed for those viewing the cricket and rugby.

3% were concerned about dog poo in the park and 3% have been distressed by a dog off lead.

3% of those who responded were concerned for the Wetland area. The responses suggested the area needed to be cleaned out, that silt and rubbish is building up in the small dam and that the native grasses are taking over. It has been suggested that the water level is low, and the Wetlands are drying out.

2% of the responses were concerned about graffiti in the reserve.

Individual comments regarding this question:

- Concern for the safety of small children near the creek
- Need a bridge over culver to Jasmine Drive
- Inlet drain at Whitelaw Avenue to the wetlands needs cleaning
- Not enough parking for large events
- Increasing the width of the court in the stadium
- Lack of different sports
- Empty space could be put to more use
- Circle of rocks serves no purpose
- BBQ not working properly
- Lack of paved paths
- Not enough drink taps at the park
- Lack of storage for clubs to store equipment, such as netball hoops and soccer nets
- Grass not mowed regularly
- Long grass can be a hazard when playing with the kids
- Lack of up-to-date play equipment for small children
- Playground needs to be bigger
- Need to attract people other than locals
- Unknown persons picking vegies leaving them on the ground to rot

Q3 SUMMARY

What should not change? What are the things that you think make this Reserve special and should not change?

In response to this question, the community has strongly indicated that the Stadium at the reserve needs to stay and is strongly valued as a sporting venue with 19% of those surveyed stating that the Stadium must stay. The Stadium is seen as the home of Roller Derby in Ballarat.

Support for the playground and circle of rocks indicates that this area of the Reserve is working well with 18% responding that they are happy with this area of the park.

14% of those surveyed are happy with the Reserve the way it is with some improvements.

11% responded with positive comments about the Wetlands, birdlife, nesting boxes and the walking track around the lake.

The oval is valued as the only sports oval in the area with 7% of those responding wanting this to remain.

6% of the responses value the Community Garden.

6% of those who completed the survey had very positive comments regarding the atmosphere of peace and quiet and friendliness at the Reserve.

4% value the skate jumps and want this area to stay.

Individual comments regarding this question included:

- Good community meeting area
- Keep the name of the Reserve
- Stadium costs are cheap
- Free access
- Absence of extensive lighting
- Maintain size of hall
- Maintain the multiple access points
- The care and attention being shown to maintenance, it is always clean and well maintained
- Car parking facilities for Delacombe Primary parents
- The Wetlands and the bird boxes set Doug Dean apart from other parks.

Q4 SUMMARY – What would make Doug Dean Reserve better?

47% of the responses were concerning the need for more shade and shelter in the Reserve.

18% suggested more shade in general. 11% of the responses suggested **more** shade in the playground area. The suggestions included the need for a cover over the playground i.e. shade sails or shade cloth and extra trees and garden to provide shade.

13% suggested more trees and native plants, 4% improved shelter from the wind and one response requested wind shelter for the Community Garden.

27% of the responses suggested improvements to the playground area. The community responses strongly value the playground area and would like to see this area developed. Suggestions include a bigger playground and the establishment of an exciting new area with unique playground equipment.

12% of the responses suggested the inclusion of a water park (like Victory Park).

Individual suggestion for improvements to the playground area include:

- Equipment suitable for older children including a flying fox (4% of responses)
- A maze
- Develop the paths and incorporate a traffic school area
- A giant slide and giant swing
- A large sheltered rotunda for birthday parties
- Spin equipment
- Another playground, BBQ area and undercover area
- Several responses suggested the playground area be fenced for safety.

27% of the responses suggested improvements in lighting to improve safety in the car park, to enable walking and training at night and to improve general safety within the Reserve. The comments refer to the need for safety when people are returning to their cars late at night after being in the Stadium. The responses suggested there is a need for lights at the Oval.

18% suggested improvements to the Stadium. 6% were concerned with ventilation in the Stadium. Suggestions to improve this include installing a roller door, vents or air conditioning. Cracks in the concrete floor need repairing and the surface is uneven.

Further suggestions include:

- Updating the toilets and changerooms
- Bigger floor space
- Concrete table tennis
- Upgrade to the scoreboard
- Clock is broken
- Gaming room
- Installing a wall climb

16% of the responses suggested improvements to the Oval and clubrooms

- New and bigger club rooms
- New club changerooms to enable better viewing
- More cover for spectators watching games
- Bench seats around the oval for viewing
- A grandstand
- Better quality pitch
- Lights around the oval
- Officially established rugby field
- A concrete path around the oval

19% of the responses suggested improvements to the Skate Park area of the Reserve.

- The inclusion of a Skate park for scooter and skateboards as BMX jumps are not suitable
- Add to the popular dirt jumps area with a basketball ring, lighting and pump track, encouraging young people in our area to be healthy active and using the space
- Introduce a BMX Pump track that riders of all abilities can use and encourage more children to ride in a safe environment
- The inclusion of a half pipe or bowl or ramp
- An outdoor flat area for roller skating
- Asphalt track for roller blading
- Parking area at the Skate Park

13% requested the toilets are improved with a suggestion that there should be more toilets.

13% of the responses were in regard to dogs in the Reserve.

- 5% suggested a fenced dog area
- One response suggested an off-lead dog reserve
- 1% suggested dogs be kept on leash
- 4% requested dog poo bag dispensers like those at Lake Wendouree
- One response suggested signage reminding people to pick up their dog droppings – Fines apply

General improvements to the Reserve have been suggested:

19% of those who responded requested more seating in the Reserve. 6% would like paths paved.

- 7% Suggest an exercise station/outdoor gym equipment
- 4% of those who responded would like a basketball court with rings
- 4% Suggest more bins
- 3% Suggest more tables
- 5% Suggest more car parking
- Connect the walking path between the 2 areas from the end of Royale Street through to the oval

- Block the road off at the end of Royale Parade, as traffic entering here is a concern for the safety of those crossing the road
- Fix all potholes in the roads
- Toilet facilities for mobility problems
- More footpath access rather than dirt tracks
- Wheelchair access
- Access to toilet facilities during early morning runs
- More signs to keep shared pedestrian/car space safe
- Ranger attends re: dogs off lead
- Designated picnic area with security cameras
- Undercover area for wet weather
- Shared space managed better - share tenants - shared responsibilities
- Community gate
- Bigger community garden
- Fencing around the dam
- Green bin for the garden
- Garden beds
- Crossing over floodway at Fleur Court
- A pedestrian crossing from the park to the Stadium
- Wet weather closed in BBQ
- No more shade along fence line - around BBQ as roots affect fences.
- I would love to see a Community Hub created there like the one at Lucas and Bonshaw, with a new kindergarten, maternal health services and other services for families in the area
- Outdoor swimming pool
- Shaded covered smoking area
- The addition of a small sound shell or large rotunda where schools, local community groups could hold outdoor entertainment in the summer months, especially Christmas and other special celebrations. This area could be where the circle of rocks near the playground is now.
- Remove graffiti
- Empty bins more often
- Provide a shaded, covered smoking area

Quote from respondent: "Name the Lake! This would make the area more identifiable as I really think this area is one of Ballarat's best kept secrets."